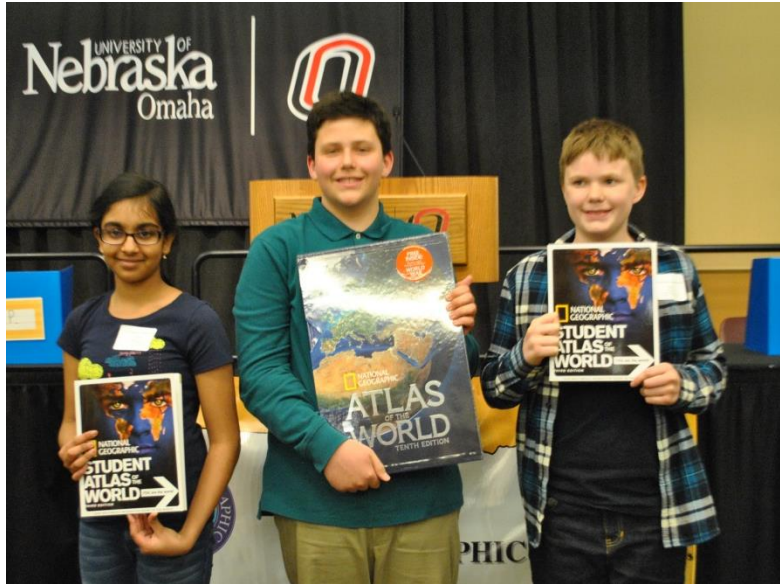


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6TH GRADER REPEATS AS NEBRASKA STATE GEOGRAPHIC BEE CHAMPION

Omaha, Nebraska (March 28, 2015)—Brendan Pennington, a sixth grader from Prairie Lane Elementary School in Omaha, took top honors at the 2015 Nebraska State Geographic Bee held March 27 at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. Brendan also won last year's competition and becomes Nebraska's first two-time Nebraska State Bee champion since Justin Mosel of Orchard won back-to-back Bee titles in 1996-97.



(l-r) Third place Anjali Pullabhotla, Champion Brendan Pennington, Second place Sam Peterson

The Championship Round came down to a sudden-victory tiebreaker question between the two finalists: "Saxony is a state in what present-day country?" Brendan correctly answered 'Germany' to take home the Nebraska State Geographic Bee championship for a second straight year.

Finishing in second place was Sam Peterson, a 5th grader from Fire Ridge Elementary School in Elkhorn and winning third place was Anjali Pullabhotla, a 7th grader from Peter Kiewit Middle School in Omaha. Anjali finished second overall in last year's Bee.

A record 107 fourth- to eighth-graders participated in the Nebraska State Geographic Bee. Concurrently, Bee competitions also took place in each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Atlantic and Pacific territories, and the Department of Defense Dependents Schools.

The National Geographic Bee is designed to encourage teachers to include geography in their classrooms, to spark student interest in the subject and to increase public awareness about geography. The competition began in 1989 in response to concern about the lack of geographic knowledge among young people in the United States.

The state winner receives \$100 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., to represent Nebraska in the 27th annual national finals of the Bee at National Geographic Society headquarters, May 11-13, 2015. The National Geographic Bee is organized by the National Geographic Society. This year's state sponsors are Google and Plum Creek.

First prize in the national competition is a \$50,000 college scholarship and lifetime membership in the National Geographic Society. Second- and third-place finishers receive \$25,000 and \$10,000 college scholarships, respectively. Additionally, the national winner will travel (with one parent or guardian), all expenses paid by National Geographic and Lindblad Expeditions, to the Galápagos Islands to experience geography firsthand through up-close encounters with the wildlife and landscapes of the islands on an expedition aboard the *National Geographic Endeavour*.

The national championship preliminary rounds will take place on Monday, May 11, in Washington, D.C. The national championship final rounds featuring the top 10 finalists and moderated by award-winning journalist Soledad O'Brien will be held on Wednesday, May 13, at National Geographic's Washington, D.C., headquarters. National Geographic Channel will air the final round of the National Geographic Bee Championship at 7 p.m. CT on Friday, May 15. It will be aired later on public television stations.

Note to Editors: Press resources on the Bee can be found at <http://press.nationalgeographic.com/geo-bee/>
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